

# Grammar & Writing

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# PSAT Prep Course Sample

## Writing Prompt

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For the students in "On-line Essay Grading" program, please follow the instructions on the cover page.

You have 25 minutes to write an essay on the topic assigned below. DO NOT WRITE ON ANOTHER TOPIC. AN OFF-TOPIC ESSAY WILL RECEIVE A SCORE OF ZERO.

Think carefully about the issue presented in the following excerpt and the assignment below.

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*High school students are faced with making decisions about the world of work. Choose a job/career/profession that interests you.*

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*Explain why you might consider it, what preparation you need to pursue it, and what skills you need to be successful.*

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Write an essay in which you develop your point of view on this issue. Without using first or second person, your essay should include a thesis, an introductory paragraph, body supports, and a conclusion, using literature or other intellectual works to defend your argument. Support your choice or position with reasoning and examples taken from your reading, studies, experience, or observations.



# PSAT Prep Course Sample

## Grammar Standard Test

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Locate the grammatical error, if any, for each of the following sentences.

Or, choose (E) if there is none.

1. Watching the film, I begun to ask  
(A) (B)  
myself why I cared about these  
(C) (D)  
characters when I felt such an intense  
unease. No error  
(E)
2. The International Phonetic Alphabet, in  
(A)  
which individual symbols represent  
(B)  
single sounds, was developed after  
(C)  
many careful thought. No error  
(D) (E)
3. Benjamin Franklin, as an inventor, he  
(A) (B)  
had broad interests, mechanical skills,  
persistence, and practical view of life.  
(C) (D)  
No error  
(E)
4. America's first satellites exploded  
(A)  
before it had risen three and a half  
(B) (C)  
feet off the ground. No error  
(D) (E)
5. Geochemistry includes the study of  
(A)  
movement of elements from one place  
(B)  
to another as a result of processes  
(C) (D)  
chemical. No error  
(E)
6. In 1903, when the Fright brothers  
(A)  
announced they had invented a flying  
(B)  
machine his news was generally  
(C) (D)  
ignored. No error  
(E)
7. The Romans' flair for doing things on a  
(A)  
colossal scale is shown by his flour  
(B) (C)  
mills built at Barbegal, France, to exploit  
water power to an unprecedented  
(D)  
extent. No error  
(E)
8. One of history's most spectacular  
(A) (B)  
executions were that of Damiens, the  
(C)  
unsuccessful assassin of Louis XV of  
(D)  
France. No error  
(E)
9. Kiwi birds search the ground with the  
(A) (B)  
bills for insects, worms, and snails to  
(C)  
eat. No error  
(D) (E)
10. There are many different ways of  
(A) (B)  
comparing the economy of nation with  
(C)  
those of another. No error  
(D) (E)

# PSAT Prep Course Sample

## Sentence Improvement

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11. The ancient Spartans tested the endurance of potential warriors, devised various ordeals, including one that required them to run bare-legged through fields of stinging nettles.
- (A) warriors, devised
  - (B) warriors devising
  - (C) warriors; and devised
  - (D) warriors by devising
  - (E) warriors with the devising of
12. The atmosphere in the classroom was changed when the snow started to fall outside, and the teacher could not get them to pay attention to the lesson after that.
- (A) outside, and the teacher could not get them to pay attention to the lesson after that
  - (B) outside, and the teacher could not get the children to pay attention to the lesson after that
  - (C) outside, in spite of the teacher's efforts, the children wouldn't pay attention to the lesson after that
  - (D) outside, causing them to lose attention to the lesson, despite the teacher's effort
  - (E) outside, the teacher was unable bring the class's attention back to the lesson after that
13. The author, showing us the modern city of Astoria in the opening paragraphs by cleverly combining the history of the Flavel family with the folklore of the Columbia River.
- (A) The author, showing us the modern city of Astoria in the opening paragraphs by cleverly combining
  - (B) We are shown the modern city of Astoria in the opening paragraphs, and the author cleverly combines
  - (C) The author shows us the modern city of Astoria in the opening paragraphs by cleverly combining
  - (D) The author, who shows us the modern city of Astoria in the opening paragraphs, and cleverly combines
  - (E) We are shown the modern city of Astoria in the opening paragraphs by the author, cleverly combined
14. The author, taking the reader on a chronological journey through her native land, skillfully combining history and legend with fragments of fiction.
- (A) The author, taking the reader on a chronological journey through her native land, skillfully
  - (B) The reader is taken on a chronological journey through the author's native land by skillfully
  - (C) The reader is taken on a chronological journey through her native land by the author who is skillfully
  - (D) The author, who takes the reader on a chronological journey through her native land, skillfully
  - (E) The author takes the reader on a chronological journey through her native land, skillfully

## PSAT Prep Course Sample

15. The Basque language, possibly one of Europe's oldest, whose origins are hotly debated.  
(A) The Basque language, possibly one of Europe's oldest, whose origins are hotly debated.  
(B) The Basque language, possibly one of Europe's oldest, its origins are hotly debated.  
(C) Possibly one of Europe's oldest languages, the origins of Basque are hotly debated.  
(D) The origins of the Basque language, possibly one of Europe's oldest, are hotly debated.  
(E) Basque is hotly debated as a language whose origins are possibly Europe's oldest.
16. The book's descriptions of the country and the town, along with its recent release as a movie, explains its sudden increase in sales in bookstores nationwide.  
(A) explains its sudden increase in sales  
(B) explains it's sudden increase in sales  
(C) explain its sudden increase in sales  
(D) is why the book is suddenly selling well  
(E) are explanations as to why sales have suddenly increased
17. The bureau is not only responsible for maintaining public lands, but inherited a monumental problem.  
(A) The bureau is not only responsible for maintaining public lands, but  
(B) The bureau is not only responsible to maintain public lands, but  
(C) The bureau is both responsible for maintaining public lands, and it  
(D) The bureau, which is responsible for the maintenance of public lands, but  
(E) The bureau, which is responsible for maintaining public lands,
18. The campus newspaper does not print as much world news as does my hometown.  
(A) as does my hometown  
(B) as does my hometown newspaper  
(C) compared to what my hometown does  
(D) like my hometown newspaper does  
(E) like the one in my hometown does
19. The chestnut, like the oak, is called an immortal tree, the reason is that the trunk and roots remain alive even after the tree has been felled.  
(A) tree, the reason is that the trunk and roots remain  
(B) tree, which has a trunk and roots that are remaining  
(C) tree, the trunk of which and the roots remain  
(D) tree because its trunk and roots remain  
(E) tree, whose trunk and roots are remaining
20. The citizens' action committee has accused the city counsel members with being careless with the spending of the taxpayers' money.  
(A) with being careless with the spending of  
(B) as to carelessness in the spending of  
(C) of carelessness in the spending of  
(D) of careless spending to  
(E) with spending carelessly of

**Paragraph Improvement**

<sup>(1)</sup> Typically people think of genius, whether it manifests itself in Mozart composing symphonies at age five or Einstein’s discovery of relativity, as having quality not just of the divine, but also of the eccentric. <sup>(2)</sup> People see genius as a “good” abnormality; moreover, they think of genius as a completely unpredictable abnormality. <sup>(3)</sup> Until recently, psychologists regarded the quirks of genius as too erratic to describe intelligibly; however, Anna Findley’s groundbreaking study uncovers predictable patterns in the biographies of geniuses. <sup>(4)</sup> Despite the regularity of these patterns, they could still support the common belief that there is a kind of supernatural intervention in the lives of unusually talented men and women. <sup>(5)</sup>

<sup>(6)</sup> For example, Findley shows that all geniuses experience three intensely productive periods in their lives, one of which always occurs shortly before their deaths; this is true whether the genius lives to nineteen or ninety.

21. Which of the following sentences, if inserted in the blank numbered Part 5, would best focus the main idea of the passage?
- (A) These patterns are normal in the lives of all geniuses.
  - (B) Eerily, the patterns themselves seem to be determined by predestination rather than mundane habit.
  - (C) No matter how much scientific evidence the general public is presented with, people still like to think of genius as unexplainable.
  - (D) Since people think of genius as a “good” abnormality, they do not really care what causes it.

22. Which of the following changes needs to be made to the passage?
- (A) Part 3: Change “too” to “to.”
  - (B) Part 6: Change “geniuses” to “geniuses.”
  - (C) Part 1: Change “Mozart” to “Mozart’s.”
  - (D) Part 4: Change “there” to “their.”
23. Which of the following numbered parts contains a nonstandard use of a pronoun?
- (A) Part 2
  - (B) Part 3
  - (C) Part 4
  - (D) Part 6

# PSAT Prep Course Sample

## Sentence Construction

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24. A rubber-band-powered aircraft \_\_\_\_\_ by Alphonse Penaud in 1871.  
(A) flown  
(B) was flown  
(C) being flown  
(D) when flown
25. The earth is not spherical, but it is slightly \_\_\_\_\_.  
(A) pear shape  
(B) shaped like a pear  
(C) pear-shaped  
(D) to shape a pear
26. Although she appreciated advice by the critic Thomas Wentworth Higgins, \_\_\_\_\_.  
(A) Emily Dickinson wanted his encouragement more than his advice  
(B) his encouragement wanted Emily Dickinson more than his advice  
(C) it was more of his advice that Emily Dickinson wanted than his encouragement  
(D) more than his advice it was his encouragement that Emily Dickinson wanted
27. George Washington and Thomas Jefferson were \_\_\_\_\_ of the American Revolution.  
(A) leaders were both prominent  
(B) both leaders prominent  
(C) both prominent leaders  
(D) prominent leaders, that were
28. The Oriental junk \_\_\_\_\_ thousands of years ago.  
(A) which is developed  
(B) developed  
(C) was developed  
(D) developing
29. In the Sahara Desert, the daytime temperature is intense, \_\_\_\_\_ the air is motionless, negligible.  
(A) with humidity  
(B) humidity being  
(C) that the humidity is  
(D) and the humidity is
30. Mammals \_\_\_\_\_ into the placentals, marsupials, and monotremes.  
(A) which are classified  
(B) classified are  
(C) are classified  
(D) being classified
31. The highest mountain in North and South America is not Mt. McKinley in North America, \_\_\_\_\_ Mt. Aconcagua in South America.  
(A) and  
(B) but  
(C) is  
(D) there is
32. A leaf \_\_\_\_\_ a waxy coat to present evaporation of water.  
(A) having  
(B) which has  
(C) that which has  
(D) has



## PSAT Prep Course Sample

33. Hiccoughs cannot be produced voluntarily \_\_\_\_\_ be easily eliminated.
- (A) nor can they
  - (B) and cannot it
  - (C) am they can
  - (D) they cannot

# PSAT Prep Course Sample

## Tense Consistency

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Remember that if you're writing in the present tense, don't shift to the past tense (or vice versa) unless you have a good reason to do so. For instance, in the sentences below there is no reason to switch from the present tense. This is especially true when writing papers about literature: whenever possible, stay in the present tense.

In each of the following paragraphs, uncover the inconsistency of tense and correct it.

34. In Toni Morrison's *The Bluest Eye*, the narrator is one of the few truly successful characters in terms of moral development. However, she was also seriously flawed in some ways.

35. She intended to play for the team during the upcoming season, but then she blows out her knee.

The following paragraphs are taken from Carolyn Chute's novel *The Beans of Egypt, Maine*. Chute's novel maintains a striking immediacy through her unusual and consistent use of the present tense; things happen in a kind of perpetual now. Select the present tense verbs and change them into past tense verb using ALL CAPS. Don't change tenses within quoted language and be careful not to change the form of verb forms that are not actually verbs.

36. He moves up the mountain like a packhorse, crunching many small sticks and branches underfoot. She rides on his shoulders like a child. She wears a child-sized summer dress, and her bare legs are almost lost in his beard. Her hair is almost a fluorescent yellow. She is still very bony, very white, very silent. She smells of her morning bath.

37. On the mountains are countless birches: gray, gold, and the white, some of the young ones bending from last winter's pitiless snows. There is not much shade here. Birds scream from all directions.

38. Earlene says, "I'm not like Roberta, you know."

39. Beal grunts over a stone wall and crashes through fern and over soggy ground. "I wish you were," he says.

40. Her throat tightens. She holds down a garbled scream.

41. They go into a dark pine grove and his boots hiss.

42. They can hear a brook. A dragonfly tests Earlene's hair, then veers away. Beal walks slowly toward the brook.

43. He carries her higher, higher, over a barbed wire. Her yellow hair attracts another dragonfly. This one buzzes in Earlene's ear. She swipes at it.

44. Beal wears his railroad cap, his dark sunglasses. She feels the packhorse muscles of his shoulders and neck working, and his arteries beat against her legs.

45. "I HATE Roberta," Earlene almost sobs. "Daddy says it's just a matter of time before the health department shuts her down."

## PSAT Prep Course Sample

46. He is silent. When he comes to the brook,  
he crosses on round, flat stones. He stops  
and looks up at the trees, at their  
autumnal mauve. He stands stock-still  
except for his hands, which stroke  
Earlene's ankles, prod the hardness of her  
nails. Then he turns.
47. Below are the tiny rooves, a tatter of field,  
the broad violet hills, here and there a  
ruffled pond. He stands and stands and  
stands, a shoulder muscle quivering now  
and then, his bearing unfriendly,  
packhorse silent.

# PSAT Prep Course Sample

## Conditional Sentences

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Choose the correct completion.

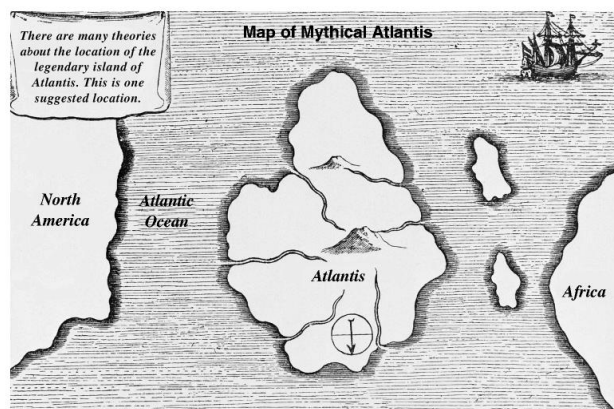
48. If I could speak Spanish, I \_\_\_\_\_ next year studying in Mexico.  
(A) will spend  
(B) had spent  
(C) would have spent  
(D) would spend
49. It would have been a much more serious accident \_\_\_\_\_ fast at the time.  
(A) was she driving  
(B) she had driven  
(C) had she been driving  
(D) if she drove
50. "Can I borrow your car for this evening?"  
"Sure, but Nora's using it right now. If she \_\_\_\_\_ it back in time, you're welcome to borrow it."  
(A) brought  
(B) would bring  
(C) will bring  
(D) brings
51. I didn't get home until well after midnight last night. Otherwise, I \_\_\_\_\_ your call.  
(A) returned  
(B) had returned  
(C) would return  
(D) would have returned
52. If energy \_\_\_\_\_ inexpensive and unlimited, many things in the world would be different.  
(A) is  
(B) will be  
(C) were  
(D) would be
53. We \_\_\_\_\_ the game if we'd had a few more minutes.  
(A) could have won  
(B) had won  
(C) won  
(D) will win
54. I \_\_\_\_\_ William with me if I had known you and he didn't get along with each other.  
(A) hadn't brought  
(B) wouldn't have brought  
(C) didn't bring  
(D) won't bring
55. The lecturer last night didn't know what he was talking about, but if Dr. Mason \_\_\_\_\_ I would have listened carefully.  
(A) lectured  
(B) was lecturing  
(C) had been lecturing  
(D) would lecture
56. If you \_\_\_\_\_ to my advice in the first place, you wouldn't be in this mess right now.  
(A) listen  
(B) will listen  
(C) had listened  
(D) listened
57. \_\_\_\_\_ interested in that subject, I would try to learn more about it.  
(A) If I am  
(B) Should I  
(C) I was  
(D) Were I

## PSAT Prep Course Sample

58. If I \_\_\_\_\_ the same problems you had as a child, I might not have succeeded in life as well as you have.  
(A) have  
(B) would have  
(C) had had  
(D) should have
59. I \_\_\_\_\_ you sooner had someone told me you were in the hospital.  
(A) would have visited  
(B) had visited  
(C) visited  
(D) visit
60. \_\_\_\_\_ more help, I could call my neighbor.  
(A) Needed  
(B) Should I need  
(C) I have needed  
(D) I should need
61. \_\_\_\_\_ then what I know today, I would have saved myself a lot of time and trouble over the years.  
(A) If I know  
(B) If I would know  
(C) Did I know  
(D) Had I known
62. Do you think there would be less conflict in the world if all people \_\_\_\_\_ the same language?  
(A) speak  
(B) will speak  
(C) spoke  
(D) had spoken
63. If you can give me one good reason for your acting like this, \_\_\_\_\_ this incident again  
(A) I don't mention  
(B) I never mention  
(C) I will never mention  
(D) will I never mention
64. I didn't know you were asleep. Otherwise, I \_\_\_\_\_ so much noise when I came in.  
(A) didn't make  
(B) won't make  
(C) wouldn't have made  
(D) don't make
65. Unless you \_\_\_\_\_ all of my questions, I can't do anything to help you.  
(A) answered  
(B) answer  
(C) would answer  
(D) are answering
66. Had you told me that this was going to happen, I \_\_\_\_\_ it.  
(A) would never have believed  
(B) hadn't believed  
(C) don't believe  
(D) can't believe
67. If Jake \_\_\_\_\_ to go on the trip, would you have gone?  
(A) doesn't agree  
(B) didn't agree  
(C) hadn't agreed  
(D) wouldn't agree

**Editing Ex.: The Lost World of Atlantis**

*Tyrone loves mysteries, so he wrote a report about a mysterious lost island. Read Tyrone's paper and look for ways he can correct and improve it. When you finish reading, answer the questions that follow.*



The Lost World of Atlantis

<sup>(1)</sup> Atlantis is the name of a land that some people believe may have once existed and then mysteriously disappeared. <sup>(2)</sup> The story of Atlantis is one of history's greatest puzzles. <sup>(3)</sup> There are some who think the tale is true, while others say it is just an entertaining myth.

<sup>(4)</sup> The story of Atlantis, it was first told by the Greek philosopher Plato in about 370 B.C. <sup>(5)</sup> Plato described a giant island in the Atlantic Ocean that was supposed to have existed more than 11,000 years earlier. <sup>(6)</sup> Atlantis was home to beautiful, noble people who worshiped Poseidon, the Greek god of the sea. <sup>(7)</sup> Some of my ancestors are Greek.

<sup>(8)</sup> The climate on it was ideal. <sup>(9)</sup> Rain fell on the fertile fields that dotted the mountainsides. <sup>(10)</sup> Animals roamed freely, the land was rich in natural resources. <sup>(11)</sup> As Atlantis became a center of trade, the island's inhabitants grew wealthy.

<sup>(12)</sup> For a long time the people of Atlantis lived happily, but as they gained riches and power, they became greedy. <sup>(13)</sup> According to Plato, this angered the gods. <sup>(14)</sup> One day explosions shook Atlantis, and a huge tidal wave swallowed the entire island.

<sup>(15)</sup> Plato wrote this account of Atlantis as if it were factual, so his story has fascinated people

for centuries. <sup>(16)</sup> Moviemakers have portrayed the island's fate in several films. <sup>(17)</sup> Scholars and scientists have launched expeditions to look for ruins of the civilization. <sup>(18)</sup> There are even people who claim to be descendants of Atlanteans, the supposed inhabitants of Atlantis.

<sup>(19)</sup> The debate continues today. <sup>(20)</sup> Although scientists say there is no real evidence to support Plato's story, some people still believe it. <sup>(21)</sup> Others think Plato may have been referring to Thera. <sup>(22)</sup> An actual island destroyed by volcanic eruptions.

<sup>(23)</sup> Is Atlantis fact or fiction? <sup>(24)</sup> It seems that there is no strong proof to support its existence. <sup>(25)</sup> Nevertheless, it is still fun to imagine the remains of a glorious land hidden somewhere deep in the ocean.

68. What change, if any, should be made in sentence 4?
- (A) Delete the comma and it
  - (B) Change **told** to **telled**
  - (C) Change **philosopher** to **Philosopher**
  - (D) Make no change

## PSAT Prep Course Sample

69. Look at the second paragraph (sentences 4–7). What should be done with sentence 7 to improve the organization of this paragraph?
- (A) Move sentence 7 to the beginning of the paragraph
  - (B) Leave sentence 7 where it is
  - (C) Move sentence 7 so that it follows sentence 5
  - (D) Delete sentence 7
70. The meaning of sentence 8 can be clarified by changing it to —
- (A) Poseidon
  - (B) the Atlantic Ocean
  - (C) them
  - (D) Atlantis
71. What revision, if any, is needed in sentence 10?
- (A) Animals roamed freely, and the land it was rich in natural resources.
  - (B) Animals roaming freely in the land rich in natural resources.
  - (C) Animals roamed freely, and the land was rich in natural resources.
  - (D) No revision is needed.
72. What change, if any, should be made in sentence 14?
- (A) Change **explosions** to **explossions**
  - (B) Delete the comma
  - (C) Change **swallowed** to **swallowing**
  - (D) Make no change
73. What change, if any, should be made in sentence 15?
- (A) Change **his** to **their**
  - (B) Change **has fascinated** to **fascinates**
  - (C) Change **centurys** to **centuries**
  - (D) Make no change
74. Which of these ideas could best follow and support sentence 20?
- (A) In one of my classes, we debated the existence of Atlantis.
  - (B) They believe that Plato’s story is true.
  - (C) I saw an interesting movie about Atlantis last year in my English class.
  - (D) These people claim that the account is too detailed to be fictional.
75. What revision, if any, is needed in sentences 21 and 22?
- (A) Others think Plato may have been referring to Thera, it was an actual island destroyed by volcanic eruptions.
  - (B) Others think Plato may have been referring to Thera, an actual island destroyed by volcanic eruptions.
  - (C) Others think Plato may have been referring to Thera. Which was an actual island destroyed by volcanic eruptions.
  - (D) No revision is needed.

# PSAT Prep Course Sample

## Redundant Conjunctions And Prepositions

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Write *down* a note. → Write a note.

It looks *like* it is going to rain. → It looks as if it is going to rain.

He looks *like* the captain of a battleship should. → He looks *as* the captain of a battleship should.

*Being* I didn't feel well, I left early. → *Since* (*because*) I didn't feel well, I left early.

*Being that* he is my friend, I asked him for some advice. → *Since* (*because*) he is my friend, I asked him for some advice.

fall off of → fall from, fall off

lose out, win out → lose, win

inside of the, outside of → inside the, outside the

the different than → different from

try and, be sure and → try to, be sure to

to graduate school → be graduated from or graduate from school

is where, is when → occurs where, occurs when

reason is because → reason is that

blame on somebody → blame somebody

place something in → place something into

something else → something else

come over to my house → come to my house

finish up, divide up → finish, divide

polish up → polish

rest up → rest

dress up → dress

refer back → refer

descend down, ascend up, → descend, ascend

rise up → rise

cannot help but → cannot help

Put "OK" if the sentence is correct. Or, improve it using the provided space.

76. I plan to write up the entire story of the accident.

77. I will have to write up to the very last minute.

78. Please come over to my house before dinner time.

79. It smells like a cigar should.

80. The results are so different from what I had expected.

81. Put the dog in the observation cage.

82. May I borrow his pen off him for one moment?

83. Being a citizen, he refused to be terrorized by threats of imprisonment without trial or revealed charges.



## PSAT Prep Course Sample

84. I hope to graduate elementary school this June.
85. I cannot help but regret that I did not listen to his advice.
86. I plan to finish up all of the work today.
87. If you lose your head, you will never be able to win out.
88. Please refer to the instructions on the back of the carton.
89. I found the missing envelope just outside of the house.
90. Being that I had not had lunch, my tension increased.
91. I am so tired I will just have to rest up until the very last moment before the contest.
92. Divide the profits up among all the members of the club.
93. He spoke up like I thought he would.
94. The reason he acts that way is because he hadn't been told the reason for our decision.
95. Please try and then you will know whether you can do the work.
96. Don't blame your carelessness on someone else.
97. Why don't you try and be cooperative?
98. Being that I could do the work rapidly, I was put in charge of the crew.
99. It seemed like time would never pass.
100. Distribute the booklets among the members of the audience.
101. The book fell off of the chair.
102. The most exciting scene was when I forgot how to stop the motor.
103. The most exciting scene was where I forgot how to stop the motor.
104. We polished up the handle on the front door until it shone.
105. The cat leaped off of the chair and onto me when she saw me.

# Answer Key

## Grammar Standard Test

1. B      begun → began
2. D
3. B      he → should be omitted  
(Benjamin Franklin, as an inventor,  
had broad ...)
4. A
5. D      processes chemical →  
chemical processes
6. C      his → their (subject and  
pronoun agreement)
7. C
8. C      were → was
9. B      the → their
10. D     those → that

## Sentence Improvement

11. D
12. B  
The antecedent of *them* is missing.  
(A) outside, and the teacher could not get the children to pay attention to the lesson after that  
(B) outside, and the teacher could not get the children to pay attention to the lesson after that  
(C) outside; in spite of the teacher's efforts, the children wouldn't pay attention to the lesson after that  
  
> Both D and E have no antecedent for *them*, and should be corrected as below.  
  
(D) outside, causing the children to lose attention to the lesson, despite the teacher's effort

(E) outside; the teacher was unable bring the class's attention back to the lesson after that

13. C
14. E
15. D  
What is hotly debated? It is the *origin*. So the subject should be the *origin*.
16. C  
(A) explains  
(B) explains it's sudden increase in sales  
(C) Correct: verb in plural form  
(D) are why the book is suddenly selling well  
(E) wordy and awkward
17. E
18. B
19. D
20. C      (idiom)  
Keep in mind the phrase: *accuse ... of*.  
(D) should replace *to* by *of*.

## Paragraph Improvement

21. B  
The main idea of this paragraph is that, while genius has a recognizable pattern, the patterns are extraordinary. Choice b directly states that the patterns have the eerie quality of the fated. Choice a does not focus ideas, but rather repeats material already stated. Choice c focuses attention on the side idea of the popular opinions about genius. Choice d contains material that is irrelevant to the main idea and argument of the passage.
22. C  
The possessive *Mozart's* is required before the gerund composing. Choice

## PSAT Prep Course Sample

a is incorrect because too, meaning excessively, is required in this context, not the preposition to. Choice b is incorrect because the possessive form does not make sense in the context. Choice d is incorrect because there, not the possessive pronoun their., is required in this context.

23. C

Part 4 contains an error in pronoun/antecedent agreement; the pronoun they must be changed to it in order to agree in number and person with its antecedent, regularity. Choices a, b, and d are incorrect because they do not contain nonstandard uses of pronouns.

### Sentence Construction

24. B

25. C

26. A

27. C

28. C

29. D

30. C

31. B

32. D

33. A

### Tense Consistency

34. In Toni Morrison's *The Bluest Eye*, the narrator is one of the few truly successful characters in terms of moral development. However, she is also seriously flawed in some ways.

35. She intended to play for the team during the upcoming season, but then she blew out her knee.

36. He MOVED up the mountain like a packhorse, crunching many small sticks and branches underfoot. She RODE on his shoulders like a child. She WORE a child-sized summer

dress, and her bare legs WERE almost lost in his beard. Her hair WAS almost a fluorescent yellow. She WAS still very bony, very white, very silent. She SMELLED of her morning bath.

37. On the mountains WERE countless birches: gray, gold, and the white, some of the young ones bending from last winter's pitiless snows. There WAS not much shade here. Birds SCREAMED from all directions.

38. Earlene SAID, "I'm not like Roberta, you know."

39. Beal GRUNTED over a stone wall and CRASHED through fern and over soggy ground. "I wish you were," he SAID.

40. Her throat TIGHTENED. She HELD down a garbled scream.

41. They WENT into a dark pine grove and his boots HISSED.

42. They COULD hear a brook. A dragonfly TESTED Earlene's hair, then VEERED away. Beal WALKED slowly toward the brook.

43. He CARRIED her higher, higher, over a barbed wire. Her yellow hair ATTRACTED another dragonfly. This one BUZZED in Earlene's ear. She SWIPED at it.

44. Beal WORE his railroad cap, his dark sunglasses. She FELT the packhorse muscles of his shoulders and neck working, and his arteries BEAT against her legs.

45. "I hate Roberta," Earlene almost SOBBED. "Daddy says it's just a mattera time before the health department shuts her down."

46. He WAS silent. When he CAME to the brook, he CROSSED on round, flat stones. He STOPPED and LOOKED up at the trees, at their autumnal mauve. He STOOD stock-still except for his hands, which

# PSAT Prep Course Sample

STROKED Earlene's ankles,  
PRODDERD the hardness of her nails.  
Then he TURNED.

47. Below WERE the tiny rooves, a tatter of field, the broad violet hills, here and there a ruffled pond. He STOOD and STOOD and STOOD, a shoulder muscle quivering now and then, his bearing unfriendly, packhorse silent.

## Conditional Sentences

- 48. D
- 49. C
- 50. D
- 51. D
- 52. C
- 53. B
- 54. B
- 55. C
- 56. D
- 57. D
- 58. C
- 59. A
- 60. A
- 61. D
- 62. C
- 63. C
- 64. C
- 65. B
- 66. A
- 67. C

## Editing Ex.: The Lost World of Atlantis

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- 68. A
- 69. D
- 70. D
- 71. C
- 72. D
- 73. C
- 74. D

75. B

## Redundant Conjunctions And Prepositions

- 76. I plan to write ~~up~~ the entire story of the accident.
- 77. OK
- 78. Please come over ~~to~~ my house before dinner time.
- 79. It smells **as** a cigar should.
- 80. OK
- 81. Put the dog **into** the observation cage.
- 82. May I borrow his pen **from** him for one moment?
- 83. OK
- 84. I hope to be **graduated from** elementary school this June.
- 85. OK
- 86. I plan to finish ~~up~~ all of the work today.
- 87. If you lose your head, you will never be able to win ~~out~~.
- 88. OK
- 89. I found the missing envelope just outside ~~of~~ the house.
- 90. **Since** I had not had lunch, my tension increased.
- 91. I am so tired I will just have to rest ~~up~~ until the very last moment before the contest.
- 92. Divide the profits ~~up~~ among all the members of the club.
- 93. He spoke ~~up~~ like I thought he would.
- 94. **He acts** that way because he hadn't been told the reason for our decision.
- 95. OK
- 96. Don't **blame someone else** for your carelessness.
- 97. Why don't you try **to** be cooperative?
- 98. **Since** I could do the work rapidly, I was put in charge of the crew.
- 99. It seemed **as** time would never pass.

## PSAT Prep Course Sample

100. OK
101. The book fell off ~~of~~ the chair.
102. The most exciting scene occurred when I forgot how to stop the motor.
103. The most exciting scene occurred where I forgot how to stop the motor.
104. We polished ~~up~~ the handle on the front door until it shone.
105. The cat leaped off ~~of~~ the chair and onto me when she saw me.